

to work with chemicals or machinery are at increased risk of eye injury. Macular degeneration takes a dramatic toll on the vision of people aged 60 and over, causing severe visual impairment and even blindness in its victims. Diseases such as glaucoma, cataract, and diabetic retinopathy can silently steal the vision of their victims without pain or other early symptoms to signal the need for immediate medical attention.

The greatest defense we have in protecting our eyesight is early detection and treatment. While many Americans receive regular physical examinations to ensure their overall fitness, they often ignore the health of their eyes. Yet, by the time many patients realize their eyesight is deteriorating, it is often too late to restore vision already lost. Even though they may not be experiencing vision problems, Americans should make a dilated eye examination part of their preventive health care routine. A dilated eye exam can reveal early signs of eye disease and make it possible to treat the affliction and preserve vision.

Good eye care is not solely for those who know they are at high risk for eye disease—it is for everyone. Certain types of eye disease tend to develop primarily in children, while others manifest themselves most often in working-age adults or older men and women. By taking good care of our eyes, we can take the important steps to maintain our quality of life and ensure the full enjoyment of all that our world has to offer.

To remind Americans of the importance of protecting their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as “Save Your Vision Week.”

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 1 through March 7, 1998, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives and to ensure that dilated eye examinations are included in their regular health maintenance programs. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations dedicated to preserving

eyesight to join in activities that will raise awareness of the measures we can take to protect and sustain our vision.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 2, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

### **Statement Announcing Grants Under the Violence Against Women Program**

*February 27, 1998*

Today, the Justice Department is awarding more than \$135 million in grants under the Violence Against Women program to help State and local authorities combat domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault. This money will be used to train police, hire prosecutors and provide assistance to victims. Since I signed the Crime Act in 1994, we have begun to transform the way law enforcement deals with domestic violence. We should be proud of the efforts underway in communities across our Nation to stop these serious crimes. These funds will help every State build and expand on the programs they have developed to ensure that abusers are captured, prosecuted, and punished.

### **Letter to the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission on Campaign Finance Reform**

*February 27, 1998*

*Dear Chairman Kennard:*

Yesterday's defeat of comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation in the Senate makes it even more imperative that the Federal Communications Commission act to provide free and reduced rate airtime to candidates and take any other steps that would